

My name is Alice Thompson and I am a community organizer, I'm a community engager. I like bringing people together to get things done and measuring results. And I love the work I do as CEO of *Black Family Development* because I get a chance to bring people together. When I think about the pillars that help to influence who I am. I think back to my early years in Louisiana with my father and my mother, and my father was the oldest of 13 boys and he was a twin. And what I recall mostly is that we often had tremendous family celebrations. It was always a celebration, and every single year, I recall those days of being just having happy, happy childhoods. And so when I think about my desire to engage the community, I think it comes from coming from a very close knit town where everybody knew each other. You could not go anywhere and not know someone in that town. So here's some cultural things I would offer to you. It's about the importance of relationships, the importance of ties to your neighbors, ties to your family, ties to your faith base. So on this relationship piece I talk about, we work with communities around the importance of nourishing relationships, right. And so my role in terms of community based work is giving support to families that would help them with their family life, their children, their education, their community. So the notion is within our culture is that we work in a community. And so the community binds us together and no one works as an individual it's the support of the community. And so you've heard this story. You may not have, but I've heard it for years. And it was true in my coming up. If it was something that was going on with the child, any neighborhood resident can check that child. It was like you was speaking to your mom and dad. Right... and so we often would say whether my mother was seeing me or my dad or Mr. and Mrs. Jones, anyone could deal with that child.